

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 AID-05
DHA-05 /084 W
-----047206 101245Z /10

O R 101102Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8208
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION SINAI
USMISSION USUN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 6777

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, IS, JO
SUBJECT:SHARON'S SETTLEMENT "PLAN"

SUMMARY: SHARON'S PUBLISHED AND TELEVISED INTERVIEWS THIS WEEK FOCUSED ATTENTION ON TWO SETTLEMENTS ISSUES: THE EXISTENCE OF A MASTER PLAN AND THE ALLEGATION THAT A NUMBER OF SETTLEMENTS HAD BEEN SECRETLY ESTABLISHED. THE GOVERNMENT HAS DENIED TO US THE SECOND POINT, BUT EXISTENCE OF A PLAN FOR ADDITIONAL SETTLEMENTS MUST BE GIVEN CREDENCE. SOME OBSERVERS ARGUE THAT SUCH A PLAN WOULD BE ISRAEL'S ANSWER TO U.S. MOVES TOWARD THE PLO. DAYAN DENIES THIS AND SAYS SHARON'S STATEMENTS ARE AN ATTEMPT TO PREVENT BEGIN FROM RETREATING FROM HIS CONVICTIONS IN THE FACE OF U.S. PRESSURE. WE BELIEVE THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT WILL INDEED REMAIN COMMITTED

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TO ADDITIONAL SETTLEMENTS AND WILL MOVE TOWARD ADOPTION OF A MASTER PLAN PERHAPS EVEN FAIRLY SOON AFTER THE DAYAN VISIT. END SUMMARY.

1. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE SHARON THIS WEEK TRAILBLAZED FUTURE JEWISH SETTLEMENT OPTIONS FOR THE BEGIN GOVERNMENT WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF WHAT QUICKLY HAS BECOME KNOWN

AS THE "SHARON PLAN." (SEE TEL AVIV 6599,) IN THE PUBLICITY BARRAGE ATTENDING THE "PLAN'S" ANNOUNCEMENT (INCLUDING A NEW MAARIV INTERVIEW OF NEARLY TWO FULL PAGES, A TELEVISION INTERVIEW, AS WELL AS A SUBSTANTIAL INTERVIEW WITH THE JERUSALEM POST), SHARON CREATED A SECOND FUROR WHEN, IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION ABOUT GUSH EMUNIM PRESSURE, HE SAID THAT WITHIN THE LAST MONTH THERE HAVE BEEN UNPUBLICIZED SETTLEMENTS AS WELL AS PUBLICIZED ONES. (HE ADDED, "AND THE GUSH EMUNIM KNOW IT.")

2. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, SHRON'S ASSERTION ABOUT "SECRET SETTLEMENTS" HAS NOT BEEN CONFIRMED BY ANY-ONE, EITHER PUBLICLY OR OTHEREISE. MINISTRY OF DEFENSE OFFICIALS, JEWISH AGENCY SETTLEMENT PLANNERS, AND THE GUSH EMUNIM HAVE ALL DENIED THAT THEY ARE AWARE OF ANY UNPUBLICIZED SETTLEMENTS. THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT HAVE MADE NO PUBLIC COMMENTS. ONE OF SHARON'S AIDES HAS EXPLAINED THAT THE MAARIV REPORTER (GOLDSTEIN) MUST HAVE MADE A SLIP OF THE PEN, BUT GOLDSTEIN REJOINED THAT SHARON MAY HAVE MADE A SLIP OF THE TONGUE. IN THE MATTER OF "SECRET SETTLEMENTS," IT WOULD APPEAR THAT SHARON HAS EGG ON HIS FACE.

3. SHARON'S SETTLEMENT PLAN IS QUITE ANOTHER MATTER. OBSERVERS HERE ARE MAKING THE POINT THAT THE PLAN, CONFIDENTIAL

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LIKE THE GOVERNMENT'S EQUAL RIGHTS (FOR THE ARABS) POLICY, CONTAINS CONSIDERABLY MORE IDEOLOGY THAN SUBSTANCE. THIS IS A VALID POINT. BUT SINCE SHARON WILLINGLY AND REPEATEDLY SAYS THAT HIS SETTLEMENT CONCEPTIONS ARE MORE A STATEMENT OF GOALS THAN AN ACTUAL PLAN WITH TIMETABLE, WE HAVE TO CONCLUDE THAT ITS ANNOUNCEMENT GAVE SOME CONSIDERATION TO TIMING AND INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL REVERBERATIONS, A CONCLUSION BUTTRESSED BY THE RECOLLECTION THAT SHARON'S PLAN ITSELF MAY NOT BE SO ABSOLUTELY NEW. WE REEMBER PUBLICITY GIVEN LAST YEAR TO SOMETHING CALLED THE "WACHMAN PLAN," WHICH SPOKE OF A SECOND BELT (PARALLEL TO THE COAST) OF JEWISH SETTLEMENT FROM THE GOLAN TO SHARM-ASH-SHAYKH AND REQUIRING SEVERAL MILLION NEW SETTLERS OVER THE NEXT TWENTY YEARS. THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF THE IDEA BY THE LABOR PARTY AND GOLDA MEIR WAS EVEN QUOTED AT THE TIME AS SAYING "I RATHER LIKE THE IDEA."

4. SOME ANALYSTS ARE SAYING THAT SHARON'S UNSETTLING ANNOUNCEMENT MAY WELL HAVE BEEN DESIGNED (BY BEGIN, DAYAN, SHARON, AND WEIZMAN) EXPRESSLY TO DEMONSTRATE TO BOTH ARABS AND AMERICANS THAT ISRAEL WILL NOT BE

PUSHED AROUND BY THE U.S. AS ATTENTION BEGINS TO FOCUS
ON THE UPCOMING ROUND OF AMERICAN CONSULTATION WITH ME
FOREIGN MINISTERS. THUS, HAARETZ DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT MATTI GOLAN SAYS THAT SETTLEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS
ON PAPER AS DISTINGUISHED FROM ACTUAL ESTABLISHMENT OF
SETTLEMENTS, ARE ISRAEL'S BEST AND PERHAPS ONLY
POLITICAL WEAPON SHORT OF WAR TO COUNTER AMERICAN
FLITRATION WITH THE PLO AND ARAB BARGAINING RIGIDITY.

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5. THIS HYPOTHESIS WAS CATEGORICALLY DENIED BY FONMIN DAYAN TO THE AMBASSADOR. DAYAN SAYS THE EXPLANATION IS IN LINE WITH A SECOND PREVAILING HYPOTHESIS HERE-- I.E., THAT SHAON AND THE GUSH EMUNIM ARE BOTH APPLYING PUBLIC PRESSURE ON THE GOVERNMENT TO MAKE SURE BEGIN DOES NOT BACKSLIDE FROM HIS CONVICTIONS IN THE FACE OF PRESSURE FROM THE U.S. WE THINK THAT ANOTHER CONSIDERATION MAY WELL BE THAT OVERSIZED, DRAMATIC LONG-RANGE SETTLEMENT PLANS CAN HELP SERVE TO KEEP THE GUSH EMUNIM IN LINE A WHILE LONGER AND AVOID FACING BEGIN WITH UNAUTHORIZED FAITS D'ACCOMPLI. SHRON IS VERY LIKELY SAYING TO THEM: YOU WILL BE ALLOWED TO SETTLE FAIRLY SOON, BUT THERE IS NO NEED

TO MAKE A FURTHER POLITICAL DEMONSTRATION BY ACTUALLY
SETTLING NOW.

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6. COMMENT: WE HAVE BEEN ASSURED BY THE HIGHEST LEVELS
OF THE GOVERNMENT (SEE TEL AVIV 6738) THAT THERE ARE NO
"SECRET" OR UNPUBLICIZED SETTLEMENTS AS SHARON WAS
REPORTED TO HAVE SAID. WE BELIEVE THAT HIS SETTLEMENT
"PLAN," HOWEVER, WAS ANNOUNCED IN FULL AWARENESS OF THE
POLITICAL REVERBERATIONS IT WOULD CAUSE, AND WAS EVEN
DESIGNED BY SHARON TO CAUSE THEM. BUT WE DO NOT BELIEVE
THAT BEGIN WAS THE INSTIGATOR; RATHER MORE LIKELY HE
IS A TARGET. AS FOR THE FUTURE; IT IS VERY DIFFICULT
FROM HERE TO CONCEIVE OF BEGIN'S GOVERNMENT NOT AGREEING
TO THE GUSH EMUNIM SETTLEMENT PROGRAM, A GOOD BIT IF
NOT ALL OF IT, AND FAIRLY SOON AFTER DAYAN'S VISIT TO THE
U.S. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE, BUT NOT LIKELY, THAT REBELLIOUS
NUCLEI IN THE GUSH EMUNIM MIGHT DISREGARD THEIR LEADER-
SHIP'S COUNSELS OF A LITTLE MORE PATIENCE, AND STAGE A
WILDCAT SQUAT BEFORE OR DURING DAYAN'S VISIT.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SHARON'S SETTLEMENT \"PLAN\" SUMMARY: SHARON'S PUBLISHED AND TELEVISED INTERVIEWS THIS WEEK FOCUSED
ATTENTION ON TWO SETTLEMENTS IS
TAGS: PDEV, PBOR, IS, JO
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/c7238648-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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